

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An input unit for inputting a user's instruction to an equipment, comprising:

- a cross key having a crossing part; and
- a dot matrix display arranged to be wedged in said crossing part of said cross key.

2. An input unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cross key comprises switch portions, and said dot matrix display displays in the vicinity of said switch portions of said cross key information related to functions assigned to said respective switch portions of said cross key.

3. An input unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein said dot matrix display further displays information related to an operation state of the equipment.

4. An input unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein a background color of said dot matrix display is changed in accordance with an operation state of the equipment.

5. An input unit for inputting a user's instruction to an equipment, comprising:

- a dot matrix display; and
- a plurality of switch portions arranged in surroundings of said dot matrix display at positions sandwiching said dot matrix display so as to oppose to each other,
wherein said dot matrix display displays in the vicinity of said switch portions information related to functions respectively assigned to said switch portions.

6. An input unit as claimed in claim 5, wherein said switch portions are respectively arranged at four positions including

an upper, a lower, a right, and a left portion of said dot matrix display.

7. An input unit for inputting a user's instruction to an equipment, comprising:

a dot matrix display; and

a switch portion arranged in surroundings of said dot matrix display, said switch portion is assigned with a plurality of functions including a function associated with a relative position with respect to said dot matrix display.

8. An input unit for inputting a user's instruction to an equipment, comprising:

a dot matrix display; and

a plurality of switch portions arranged in surroundings of said dot matrix display, and said switch portions respectively assigned with functions corresponding to relative positions of said plurality of switch portions with respect to said dot matrix display.

9. An information recording apparatus for recording external information, including an input unit for transmitting a user's instruction to said information recording apparatus, said input unit comprising a cross key and a dot matrix display arranged to be wedged in a crossing of said cross key.

10. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said dot matrix display displays information related to functions assigned to respective switch portions of said cross key in the vicinity of respective switch portions.

11. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising a mode switch for setting an operation mode of said information recording apparatus,

wherein said dot matrix display displays information related to said operation mode set by said mode switch.

12. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a display unit for displaying said information,

wherein said input unit and said display unit are arranged on the same face of said information recording apparatus as each other.

13. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a display unit for displaying said information,

wherein said input unit and said display unit are arranged on the same face of said information recording apparatus as each other.

14. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said input unit is arranged on a face of said information recording apparatus that faces a user when the user uses said information recording apparatus in such a manner that said input unit is positioned at an upper portion of a center of the face on a right side of the center.

15. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said dot matrix display is arranged to have a plurality of background colors, and one of said plurality of background colors is selected in accordance with an operation mode of said information recording apparatus.

16. An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said plurality of background colors include a color for a recording state and another color for a playback state.

17. A digital camera for capturing an image, comprising:
an image-capturing unit operable to capture an image;
a capture controlling unit operable to control said
image-capturing unit;
a processing unit operable to process said image; and
an operating unit operable to transmit a user's instruction
at least to said processing unit, said operating unit comprising
a cross key and a dot matrix display arranged to be wedged in a
crossing of said cross key.